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HOUSE MEMORIAL 73

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Jim R. Trujillo

A MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY, RESPONSIBILITIES AND
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
RESTORATION ACTIVITIES AT LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY.**

**WHEREAS, the United States department of energy's national
laboratories are vital and valuable assets to the residents of
New Mexico and the rest of the United States; and**

**WHEREAS, after years of confrontation, litigation and lack
of progress, Los Alamos national laboratory and the New Mexico
department of environment recently signed an order on consent
defining the conduct and schedule of the Los Alamos national
laboratory environmental cleanup through the year 2015; and**

**WHEREAS, all parties involved should strive toward
complete transparency on a project of the magnitude and
potential impact to human health and the environment as the Los**

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1 Alamos national laboratory environmental cleanup; and

2 WHEREAS, environmental issues and policy are often
3 subverted, delayed and sidetracked by radical activists and
4 special interest groups to the overall detriment of society;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, the New Mexico department of environment has
7 limited technical and financial resources to provide adequate
8 project oversight or effective and necessary public
9 participation and outreach and no ability to perform
10 independent, technical oversight of the facility; and

11 WHEREAS, the northern New Mexico citizens advisory board
12 provided comments to the Los Alamos national laboratory order
13 on consent to the New Mexico department of environment on
14 September 30, 2004 expressing, in part:

15 (A) the need for adopting a comprehensive community
16 relations plan to support public involvement and process
17 accountability;

18 (B) concern as to whether there are sufficient
19 resources available to the New Mexico department of environment
20 to ensure the timely and technically adequate review as
21 required by the order; and

22 (C) a strong recommendation to implement a
23 commercially available geographic information system database
24 on the web for review by the public; and

25 WHEREAS, the New Mexico department of environment

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1 contracts with private sector consulting firms to provide
2 necessary qualified expertise on challenging technical and
3 politically controversial issues such as the mixed waste
4 landfill closure at Sandia national laboratories; and

5 WHEREAS, the waste management, education and research
6 consortium, composed of the university of New Mexico, New
7 Mexico state university, Dine college and New Mexico institute
8 of mining and technology, has provided valuable, timely and
9 insightful peer review for the New Mexico department of
10 environment of contentious and politically charged
11 environmental projects in the past; and

12 WHEREAS, the Los Alamos national laboratory cleanup is
13 budgeted at approximately eight hundred million dollars
14 (\$800,000,000) over the next ten years; and

15 WHEREAS, it is irresponsible to conduct a cleanup of this
16 magnitude in an inefficient and wasteful manner without
17 adequate independent technical oversight to ensure
18 effectiveness and accountability;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
20 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico
21 legislative council request that the appropriate interim
22 legislative committee study the feasibility, roles,
23 responsibilities and funding requirements of an independent
24 oversight panel to assist in the oversight of the Los Alamos
25 national laboratory cleanup; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee consider the actions and effectiveness of other states and federal agencies engaging in similar facility-based resource conservation and recovery act cleanups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the use of decision-based data quality objective planning requirements, as well as comprehensive public involvement and outreach, in order to provide full understanding of the process by the public and full accountability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.